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Author: Lilia Gurez

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The integration of Moldova in the European Union brings several commitments to be honoured. One of these is facilitating the dialogue between business and Parliament. Thus, the International Association of Business and Parliament (IABP) has launched in Chisinau the national scheme of cooperation between business and Parliament. The objective of this initiative is establishing and strengthening good governance and social dialogue principles.

Dr Romeo Turcan, the executive director of IABP-Moldova: As an information resource, IABP-Moldova has proposed to initiate a debate regarding other European Parliaments' experience in the area of regulating MPs' outside business interests. We recently organized a round table meeting chaired by the Maria Postoico, deputy speaker of the Moldovan Parliament. MPs from all parliamentary factions as well as from independent groups took part in the meeting and all showed a profound interest in European practices on regulating MPs outside business interests. The debate was even more engaging as Bruce George, UK MP, President Emeritus of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and President of the IABP was also involved in this activity. He has been acting as an MP in the Parliament of the United Kingdom for the last 33 years.

The round table was not only a theoretical one, but also a practical event. We also distributed for the first time for the Moldovan MPs an informative study inspired from the European Parliaments 'Ten steps towards a transparent Parliament'. This study was elaborated by the IABP and published in cooperation with the international Republican Institute (IRI, under a USAID programme), on the basis of the EU experience and is targeting the emerging democracies. It contains concrete information on the regulation of MPs' outside business interests. The study shows that if an MP breaks the Parliamentary Code of Practice in this respect, he/she can be excluded from the Parliament. This is a shame and journalists do not hesitate to publish this information.

Bruce George: We are open to share our experience with the members of the Moldovan Parliament. We would like Moldova to become a truly democratic state where no corruption exists at any level. For this reason we will do our best, via IABP, to make the dialogue between business and Parliament as open and cooperative as possible, especially in elaborating legislative initiatives or introducing new changes to business and economy related draft laws.

IABP has already successfully launched business and Parliament cooperation mechanisms in over 20 countries, including Georgia and Armenia.

Maria Postoico: Being actively involved in fulfilling our commitments towards the Council of Europe, through passing a series of laws in various areas, Moldovan MPs contribute to strengthening democracy. Therefore we still have to achieve much in the

area of legislative actions and many of these are provided for in the EU-Moldova action plan. I strongly believe that creating a business and Parliament cooperation scheme would visibly contribute to implementing these tasks in our country.

The national business and Parliament cooperation scheme of the IABP will prepare a research regarding the Code of Principles to regulate MPs' outside business interests as well as a registry where MPs would make notes regarding these interests. Also, IABP-Moldova will inform the Parliament regarding the creation of such a Regulatory Council and the order of electing the Council Chairman. These activities will all be implemented in accordance with European Parliaments' experience and the Moldovan MPs will be informed about it through IABP-Moldova.

Photos:

1. Romeo Turcan and Maria Postoico
2. Archil Bakuradze, Fredrick Hyde Chambers and Bruce George